



Mental Health Services Interventions for Veterans with PTSD



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Research Career Development Award Data

DATES: January 1, 2007 – June 30, 2010

MENTORS:

- Eugene Z. Oddone, MD, MHSc
- Morris Weinberger, PhD
- Marvin Swartz, MD
- Jean C. Beckham, PhD

PTSD & Military Sexual Trauma in Women

- PTSD is twice as common in women as compared to men; sexual trauma is strongest predictor of PTSD.
- Sexual trauma-related PTSD associated with: increased depression, substance abuse, health care visits, service use and costs, and decreased health status functioning.
- In FY 2004, 20% of women veterans screened reported military sexual trauma; over 25,000 women survivors of military sexual trauma have been identified.
- 30% of women who served during or after the Vietnam War were sexually assaulted during their service (Sadler et al., 2001).
- Among women VA clinic users, 23% report military sexual assault and 55% report military sexual harassment (Skinner et al., 2000).
- Based on known prevalence rates and the growing number of women in the military, the volume of military sexual trauma cases seen at VA is likely to increase.

Effects of Guided Imagery for Military Sexual Trauma on PTSD Symptoms, Neurosteroids, and Brain Function

PI: Strauss

CO-INVESTIGATORS: Marx, Morey, McCarthy, Chaudhry

FUNDING: VET-HEAL/Samuely Institute (2006-2007)

DESIGN & PARTICIPANTS: Randomized controlled trial of 38 women veterans at Durham VAMC with PTSD related to military sexual trauma

INTERVENTION: Guided Imagery for Trauma (GIFT); a 12 week, self-management audio versus relaxing music (placebo control)

- Orientation session with clinician
- Weekly telephone coaching
- Midpoint consultation session with clinician
- Self-administered guided imagery audio
- Self-monitoring

STUDY AIMS:

- Examine the efficacy of GIFT in improving clinical outcomes in women veterans with PTSD related to military sexual trauma.
- Examine the effects of GIFT on fronto-limbic brain function.
- Examine effects of GIFT on neuroactive steroid levels.

STUDY PROGRESS

- N=18 enrolled (55% ethnic minority)

PILOT DATA: FEASIBILITY STUDY

FUNDING: Locally initiated project grant, Department of Veteran Affairs (2003-2004); Institute of Medical Research, in-house grant (2005-2006)

KEY FINDINGS:

- N = 15 women veterans with PTSD related to military sexual trauma
- Large reduction in PTSD symptoms (Cohen's d = 0.72-1.97, p < .05)

Recent Manuscripts

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